

WE CLAIM:

1. A contextual user interface comprising:
 - a first user interface definition comprising a plurality of controls disposed about a human interface device;
 - 5 a second user interface definition comprising a plurality of controls disposed about the human interface device;
 - a process that is responsive to a context as indicated by at least one status condition to select between the first and second user interface format; and
 - a process for presenting the selected user interface definition on the human
 - 10 interface device.
2. The contextual user interface of claim 1 wherein at least some of the plurality of controls defined by the first user interface definition are included in the second user interface definition.
3. The contextual user interface of claim 1 wherein the first and second user interface definition use color to indicate a state of the status condition.
4. The contextual user interface of claim 1 wherein the first and second user interface definition differ from each other in that at least one of the plurality of controls is given focus in the second user interface definition that does not have focus in the first user interface definition.
5. The contextual user interface of claim 1 wherein the process is responsive to an event represented by the status condition or a change in the status condition.
6. The contextual user interface of claim 1 wherein the process is responsive to a user identification represented by the status condition.
7. A control unit for a home automation system comprising:
 - computing resources configured to execute application code on the control
 - unit;
 - context information stored in the control unit;

- 5 a display presenting a graphical user interface;
- a plurality of interactive user interface elements presented on the graphical user interface such that a single user interface element can simultaneously display information about the context as well implementing behavior to send messages to a controlled system that can affect change in the displayed information
8. The control unit of claim 7 wherein the context information comprises a temperature.
9. The control unit of claim 7 wherein the context information comprises a security system arming status.
- 5 10. The control unit of claim 7 wherein the context information comprises a volume control.
11. The control unit of claim 7 wherein the context information comprises a light level.
12. The control unit of claim 7 wherein the controlled system information comprises an HVAC system.
- 5 12. The control unit of claim 7 wherein the controlled system information comprises an entertainment system
13. The control unit of claim 7 wherein the controlled system information comprises a lighting subsystem.
14. The control unit of claim 7 wherein the graphical user interface elements include background elements, passive elements, information display elements that present information from application software operating on the control unit, and control elements that cause application software operating on the control unit
- 5 to initiate programmed behaviors.
15. The control unit of claim 14 wherein the user interface as a whole is contextually sensitive in that the appearance of user interface elements and/or the

behavior of user interface elements are varied in a manner that is dependent on the context of the control unit.

16. The control unit of claim 7 wherein the context information comprises state information known to the control unit, which includes context-specific state information known to a particular control unit as well as global context information known to multiple or all control units in a system.

17. The control unit of claim 7 wherein the behavior is implemented by interacting with a user interface element that simultaneously displays information about the state of a controlled subsystem.